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ADDRESS
TO
STUDENTS OF DIVINITY.

✓
BY REV. JOHN BROWN,
Late Minister of the Gospel in Haddington, Scotland.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following "ADDRESS TO STUDENTS OF DIVINITY," is prefixed to "Brown's Compendious View of Natural and Revealed Religion." We have often regretted that this truly admirable Address was so little handled or known by Students of Divinity in this country. It is now offered to the youth of America who are looking to the sacred office, in manual form, with an earnest recommendation of it to their prayerful and repeated perusal.

The local and ecclesiastical allusions, though not strictly *appropriate*, are yet retained, as both highly interesting in themselves, and as necessary to preserve the connection and entireness of a production, of which not one word ought to be lost.

THE EDITOR.

ADDRESS.

MY DEAR PUPILS,

FOR my assistance in instructing you, this *Compendious View of Natural and Revealed Religion* was formed. To gratify a number of you, it is now published. Being formed, not to make you read, but to make you *think much*, it must now appear dry and meagre, as stripped of its additional remarks; and no doubt some of its expressions admit of a sense which I never intended. To render you mighty in the Scriptures, readily able to support the several articles of our holy religion by the self-evidencing and conscience-commanding testimony of the Holy Ghost, and accustomed to express the things of God in his own language, multitudes of texts are ordinarily quoted, which I have laboured to lodge in your memories. To manifest the extensive connexion of divine truths, some leading articles relative to the *perfections of God*, the *person of Christ*, &c. are traced through many others, in a manner which will perhaps be accounted a digression. Few insignificant, local, or dormant controversies have been brought on the field: Nor, that I know, have the enemies of the truth been unfairly represented or indiscreetly answered, in others. The deceit or wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

While I have been occupied in instructing you, your consciences must bear me witness, that my principal concern was to impress your minds with the great things of God. Now, when I am gradually stepping into the eternal state, to appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, permit me to beseech you, as you wish to promote His honour, and the eternal salvation of your own and your hearers' souls,

1. See that ye be REAL CHRISTIANS yourselves. I now more and more see, that nothing less than REAL, REAL Christianity, is fit to die with, and make an appearance before God. Are ye then indeed *born again, born from above, born of the Spirit? created in Christ Jesus unto good works!*—*new creatures in Christ Jesus, having all old things passed away, and all things become new?* Are ye indeed the circumcision which *worship God in the Spirit*, habitually reading, meditating, praying, preaching, conversing with your hearts, under the influence of the Holy Ghost? Have you no *confidence in the flesh*, no confidence in your self-righteousness, your learning, your address, your care and diligence, your gifts, and graces;—but being emptied of self in every form, are *poor in spirit, less than the least of all saints*, and the least of all God's mercies; nay, the very *chief of sinners* in your own sight? Has it pleased God *to reveal his Son* in you? and to instruct you with a strong hand, to count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus as your Lord, and to count them but dung, that you may win him, and be found in him, not having your own righteousness, but the righteous-

ness which is of God by faith,—and to know the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings,—and to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, John iii. 3, 5, 6. Eph. ii. 10. 2 Cor. v. 17. Gal. vi. 15. Phil. iii. 3. Matt. v. 3. xvi. 24. Eph. iii. 8. Gen. xxxii. 10. 1 Tim. i. 15. Gal. i. 15, 16. Phil. iii. 7—14. If you be, or become either *graceless* preachers or ministers of the Gospel, how terrible is your condition! If you open your Bible, the sentence of your redoubled damnation flashes into your conscience from every page. When you compose your sermon, you but draw up a tremendous indictment against yourselves. If you argue against, or reprove other men's sins, you but aggravate your own. When you publish the holy law of God, you but add to your rebellion against it, and make it an awful witness against your treacherous dissimulation. If you announce its threatenings, and mention *hell* with all its insupportable torments, you but enfeoff yourselves in it, and serve yourselves heirs to it as the inheritance appointed you by the Almighty. When you speak of Christ and his excellencies, fulness, love, and labours, it is but to trample him under your feet. If you take his covenant and Gospel into your mouth, it is but to profane them, and cast them forth to be trodden under foot of men. If you talk of spiritual experiences, you but do despite to the Spirit of grace. When you commend the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and invite sinners to new-covenant fellowship with them, you but treacherously stab them under the fifth rib, betray

them with a kiss, and from your heart cry, This is the heir, the God, come let us kill him. While you hold up the glass of God's law or Gospel to others, you turn its back to yourselves. The Gospel, which ye preach to others, is hid,—is a savour of death unto death to you, the vail remaining on your hearts, and the god of this world having blinded your minds. Without the saving, the heart-transforming knowledge of Christ and him crucified, all your knowledge is but an accursed *puffer up*, and the murderer of your own souls. And unless the grace of God make *an uncommon stretch* to save you, how desperate is your condition! Perhaps no person under heaven bids more unlikely to be saved, than a *graceless (Seceding) minister*;—his conscience is so overcharged with guilt, so seared as with an hot iron, and his heart so hardened by the abuse of the Gospel.—Alas! my dear pupils, must all my instructions, all the strivings of the Holy Ghost, all your reading, all your meditations, all your sermons, all your evangelical principles, all your professions, all your prayers, as traps and snares, take and bind any of you, hand and foot, that, as *unprofitable servants*, you may be cast into *utter darkness*, with all the contents of your Bible and other books,—all your gifts and apparent-like graces, as it were, inlaid in your conscience, that, like fuel, or oil, they may forever feed the flames of God's wrath upon your souls! After being set for a time at the gate of heaven, to point others into it,—after prophesying in Christ's name, and wasting yourselves to show others the way of salvation, and to light up the friends of our

Redeemer to their heavenly rest,—must your own lamp go out in everlasting darkness, and ye be bidden, *Depart from me, I never knew you, ye workers of iniquity?* —Must I,—must all the churches behold you at last brought forth and condemned as arch-traitors to our Redeemer? Must you, in the most tremendous manner, forever sink into the bottomless pit, under the weight of the blood of the great God our Saviour,—under the weight of murdered truths, murdered convictions, murdered gifts, murdered ministrations of the Gospel, and murdered souls of men!

2. Ponder much, as before God, what proper FURNITURE you have for the ministerial work, and labour to increase it. To him that hath shall be given. Has Jesus bestowed on you the Holy Ghost? What distinct knowledge have you of the mysteries of the kingdom? What aptness have you to teach, bringing out of the good treasure of your own heart *things new and old!* What ability to make the deep mysteries of the Gospel plain to persons of weak capacities, and to represent things delightful or terrible in a proper and affecting manner? What proper quickness in conceiving divine things; and what rooted inclination to study them, as persons devoted to matters of infinite importance? What peculiar fitness have you for the pulpit, qualifying you, in a plain, serious, orderly, and earnest manner, to screw the truths of God into the consciences of your hearers? With what stock of self-experienced truths and texts of inspiration did, or do you enter on the ministerial work? Of what truths, relative to the law of God,—or relative

to sin, Satan, or the desertions and terrors of God, has your soul not only seen the evidence, but felt the power? What declarations, promises, offers, and invitations of the glorious Gospel, have ye, with joy and rejoicing of heart, found and eaten, and therein tasted and seen that God is good? Of what inspired truths and texts can you say, *Even so we have believed, and therefore we speak*: what we have seen and heard with the Father, and tasted and handled of the word of life, that we declare unto you. Thrice happy preacher, whose deeply-experienced heart is, next to his Bible, his principal note-book! John xx. 22. Matt. xiii. 22. 12. 52. 1 Tim. iii. 2. Tit. i. 9. 2 Tim. ii. 2. Isa. l. 4. xlix. 2. Jer. xv. 16. 2 Cor. iv. 13. 1 John i. 1—3. John viii. 34.

3. Take heed that your CALL from Christ and his Spirit to your ministerial work, be not only REAL but EVIDENT. Without this you can neither be duly excited or encouraged to your work; nor hope, nor pray for divine success in it; nor bear up aright under the difficulties you must encounter, if you attempt to be faithful. If you run unsent by Jesus Christ and his Spirit, notwithstanding the utmost external regularity in your license, call, and ordination, you, in the whole of your ministrations, must act the part of a sacriligious thief and robber, a pretended and treacherous ambassador for Christ and his Father, and a murderer of men's souls, not profiting them at all. What direction,—what support,—what assistance,—what encouragement,—what reward can you then expect? Ponder, therefore, as before God: Have you taken this honour to yourselves? or,

Were ye called of God as was Aaron? Has Jesus Christ sent you to preach the Gospel, and laid upon you a delightful and awful *necessity* to preach it? While he powerfully determined you to follow providence, and avoid every selfish and irregular step towards entrance into the office as a mean of *eating a piece of bread*, or enjoying carnal ease or honour, did he breathe on you, and cause you to receive the Holy Ghost,—filling you with deep compassion to the perishing souls of men, and a deep sense of your unfitness for such arduous work, and fervent desire, that if the Lord were willing to use you as instruments of winning souls, he would sanctify you, and make you meet for his work?—Perhaps, providentially shut out from other callings to which you or your parents inclined, did you, in your education, go up *bound in the Spirit* by the love of Christ burning in your hearts, and constraining you cheerfully to surrender yourselves to poverty, reproach, and hatred of men, for promoting his name and honour, and the salvation of men in the world?—What oracles of God, powerfully impressed on your soul, have directed and encouraged you to this work?—Know you in what form Jesus Christ gave you your commission? Whether to *open the eyes of the Gentiles, and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God,—that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them who are sanctified by faith in him*:—Or to *go make the heart of this people fat, their ears heavy, and to shut their eyes*? Jer. xxiii. 21, 22. 32. Isa. xlix. 1, 2. Jer. i. Ezek. ii. iii. xxxiii. Mat. x. Luke vi. x. John x.

Acts i. Heb. v. 4. Rom. x. 15. 1 Cor. i. 17. ix. 16. Acts xxvi. 17, 18. Isa. vi. 8, 9.

4. See that your END in entering into, or executing your office, be single and disinterested. Dare you appeal to him, whose eyes are *as a flame of fire*, and who *searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins*, to give to every man according to his works, that you never inclined to be put into the priest's office, that you might *eat a piece of bread, and look every one for his own gain from his quarter*; that ye *seek not great things for yourselves*; that ye *covet no man's silver, gold, or apparel*; that ye seek not men's property, but *themselves*, that you may win them to Christ for their eternal welfare; that ye seek not your own honour, ease, or temporal advantage, but the things of Christ and his people; that ye *seek not honour or glory of men*, but the honour of Christ or his Father, in the eternal salvation of souls; and have determined to prosecute this end through whatever distress or danger the Lord may be pleased to lay in your way? Jer. xlv. 5. 1 Sam. xii. 3. Acts xx. 33. Isa. lvi. 11. 2 Tim. iv. 10. 1 Cor. ix. 12, 16. 2 Cor. vii. 2. xi. 9. xii. 13, 14. vi. 4—19. Phil. ii. 21. 1 Thess. ii. 4—9. John vii. 18.

5. See that your minds be deeply impressed with the NATURE, EXTENT, and IMPORTANCE of your ministerial work—That therein it is required of you, as *ambassadors for Christ*, as *stewards* of the mysteries and manifold grace of God,—*to be faithful*;—to serve the Lord with your spirit, and with much humility, in the Gospel of his Son;—to testify repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, not keeping back

or shunning to declare every part of the counsel of God, or any profitable instruction, reproof, or encouragement; and not moved with any reproach, persecution, hunger, or nakedness;—to be ready not only to be bound, but to die for the name of the Lord Jesus, in order to finish your course with joy. Bearing with the infirmities of the weak, and striving together in prayer, that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified, and your messages provided by God, and made acceptable to your hearers, you must labour with much fear and trembling, determined to know, to glory in, and make known, nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified,—preaching the Gospel, *not with enticing words of man's wisdom*, as men-pleasers, but with great plainness of speech, in demonstration of the Spirit and with power,—speaking the things which are freely given you by God, not in the words which man's wisdom teaches, but in *words which the Holy Ghost teaches*, comparing spiritual things with spiritual,—as having the mind of Christ, always triumphing in HIM,—and making manifest the savour of the knowledge of him in every place, that you may be a sweet savour of Christ in them who are saved, and in them who perish;—as of sincerity, as of God, in the sight of God, speaking in Christ, and through the mercy of God, not fainting, but renouncing the hidden things of dishonesty;—not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully, or corrupting the truth, but manifesting the truth to every man's conscience, as in the sight of God;—not preaching yourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and yourselves ser-

vants to the Church for his sake, alway bearing about his dying, that his life may be manifested in you;—and knowing the terror of the Lord, and deeply impressed with the account which you and your hearers must give to him of your whole conduct in the day of judgment,—awed by his infinite authority, constrained and inflamed by His love, you must persuade men, beseeching them to be recenciled unto God, and making yourselves manifest to God and to their conscience,—and, as their edification requires, changing your voice, and turning yourselves every way, and becoming all things to all men, in order to gain them to Christ,—jealous over them with a godly jealousy; in order to espouse them to him as chaste virgins,—travailing in birth, till he be formed in their hearts. You must take heed to your ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfil it:—stir up the gifts which were given you,—give yourselves wholly to reading, exhortation, and doctrine;—and perseveringly take heed to yourselves and to the doctrine which you preach, that you may serve yourselves and them that hear you;—watching for their souls, as they who do, and must give an account for them to God,—rightly dividing the word of truth, and giving every man his portion in due season: faithfully warning every man with tears, night and day, teaching every man, particularly *young ones*, and labouring to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus;—and warring, not after the flesh, nor with carnal weapons, but with such as are mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds and cast-

ing down imaginations, and subduing every thought and affection to the obedience of Christ. Having Him for the end of your conversation, and holding fast the form of sound words, in faith in and love to him, —not entangling yourselves with the affairs of this life, nor ashamed of the Lord, or of his cause or prisoners, but ready to endure hardships as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, and to endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may obtain salvation with eternal glory; —ye must go forth without the camp, bearing his reproach, and, exposed as spectacles of sufferings to angels and men, must not faint under your tribulations, but feed the flock of God which he has purchased with his own blood, and over which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers,—preaching the word in season and out of season, reproving, rebuking, and exhorting with all long-suffering and doctrine,—taking the oversight of your people, not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre or worldly gain, or larger stipends, but of a ready mind,—neither as being lords over God's heritage, but as examples to the flock,—exercising yourselves to have a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man,—having a good conscience, willing in all things to live honestly,—exercised to godliness,—kindly affectioned, disinterested, holy, just and unblameable,—prudent examples of the believers, in conversation, in charity, in faith, and purity,—fleeing youthful lusts, and following after righteousness, peace, faith, charity,—not striving, but being gentle unto all men,—in meekness, instructing them who oppose themselves, avoiding foolish

and unlearned questions, and old wives' fables,—fleeing from perverse disputings and worldly-mindedness, as most dangerous snares; and following after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness;—fighting the good fight of faith, and laying hold on eternal life;—keeping your trust of Gospel truth and ministerial office, and, without partiality or precipitancy, committing the same to faithful men, who may be able to teach others;—and, in fine, faithfully labouring, in the Lord, to try, and confute, and censure false teachers, publicly rebuke or excommunicate open transgressors, restore such as have been overtaken in a fault in the spirit of meekness,—and having compassion on them, to pull them out of the fire, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh, and never conniving at, or partaking with any in their sins. Who is sufficient for these things? May your sufficiency be of God; and as your days are, so may your strength be. Ezek. ii. 7. iii. 9. 17—21. xxxiii. 7—9. Isa. lviii. 1. Jer. i. 17, 18. xv. 19, 20. Mic. iii. 8. Mal. ii. 6, 7. Matth. x. 16—39. xix. 28, 29. xx. 25—28. xxiii. 3—12. xxiv. 42—51. xxviii. 18—20. Acts xviii. 24—28. xx. 18—35. xxiv. 16. xxvi. 16—23. 1 Cor. ii. 1—5, 9, 12, 13. i.—v. ix. xii.—xiv. 2 Cor. ii.—vi. x.—xiii. Rom. i. 9, 16. ix. 1, 2. x. 1. xii. xv. Gal. i. 8—16. iv. 19. Eph. iii. 7, 8, 9. iv. 11—15. vi. 19, 20. Col. iv. 7, 17. i. 23—29. ii. 1, 2. 1 Thess. ii. iii. v. 12. 1 Tim. iii.—vi. 2 Tim. i—iii. Heb. xiii. 7, 17, 18. 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11. v. 1—4. Jude 22, 23. Rev. ii. iii. xi. 3—7. xiv. 6—11.

6. See that ye take heed to your spirits that ye deal not TREACHEROUSLY with the Lord. In approaching to

or executing the ministerial office, keep your hearts with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of eternal life, or death, to yourselves and others. Building up yourselves in your most holy faith, and praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. If you do not *ardently* love Christ, how can you *faithfully* and *diligently* feed his lambs—his sheep? Alas! how many precious sermons, exhortations, and instructions are quite marred and poisoned by coming through the cold, carnal, and careless heart of the preacher, and being attended with his imprudent, untender, and lukewarm life? If you have not a deep-felt experience of the terrors of the Lord,—of the bitterness of sin, vanity of this world, and importance of eternity,—and of the conscience-quieting and heart-captivating virtue of Jesus' bleeding love, how can you be duly serious and hearty in preaching the gospel? If, all influenced by a predominate love to Christ, your heart be not fixed on everlasting things, and powerfully animated to an eager following of peace and holiness, how can you, without the most abominable treachery, declare to men their chief happiness, and the true method of obtaining it? If your graces be not kept lively, your loins girt, and your lamps burning, all enkindled by the heart-constraining love of Christ, how cold, how carnal, and blasted must your sacred ministrations be? If your work, as ambassadors of Christ, be to transact matters of everlasting importance between an infinite God, and immortal, but perishing, souls of men; if the honours

and privileges of it be so invaluable, what inexpressible need have you of habitual dependence on Christ by a lively faith? What self-denial, what ardent love to Christ and his Father, what disinterested regard to his honour, what compassion to souls, what prudence, what faithfulness and diligence, what humility and holy zeal, what spirituality of mind and conversation, what order, what plainness, what fervour, what just temperature of mildness and severity,—is necessary in every part of it!—If, while you minister in holy things, your lusts prevail and are indulged, you have less of real or lively Christianity than the most weak and uncircumspect saints under your charge;—if your evil heart of unbelief fearfully carry you off from the living God, and you can live unconcerned while the powerful and sanctifying presence of God is withheld from yourselves or your flocks,—how sad is your and their case!—If your indwelling pride be allowed to choose your company, your dress, your victuals, nay, your text, your subject, your order, your language;—if it be allowed to indite your thoughts, and, to the reproach and blasting of the gospel of Christ, to deck your sermon with tawdry ornaments and fancies, as if it were a stage-play, to blunt and muffle up his sharp arrows with silken smoothness and swollen bombast;—if it be allowed to kindle your fervour, and form your looks, your tone, your action;—or to render you enraptured or self-concited, because of subsequent applause;—or sad and provoked, because your labours are contemned; how dreadful is your danger and that of your hearers! How can ministerial labours,

originating in pride, spurred on by the fame of learning, diligence, or holiness, hurt the interests of Satan, from whose influence they proceed? If pride be allowed to cause you to envy or wound the characters of such as differ from, or outshine you, or to make you reluctant to Christian reproof from your inferiors, how fearful is your guilt and danger! Pride indulged is no more consistent with a Christian character, than drunkenness and whoredom. If you take up or cleave to any principle or practice in religion, in the way of factious contention, how abominable to God is the "sower of discord among brethren?" If you undervalue the peace and prosperity of the Church of Christ, and are not afflicted with her in all her afflictions, how cruel, and unchrist-like your conduct! If, in justly proving your opponents deceivers and blasphemers, you, by your angry manner, plead the cause of the devil, will God accept it as an offering at your hands? If you are slothful in studying or declaring the truths of Christ, if, to save labour or expense, you are inactive or averse to help such as have no fixed ministrations, or to contrive or prosecute projects for advancing the kingdom of Christ, and promoting the salvation of men, how great is your baseness, how dreadful your hazard! Think, as before God, did Jesus Christ furnish you for, and put you into the ministry, that you might idle away, or prostitute your devoted time, tear his Church, conceal or mangle his truths, betray his interests, or starve and murder the souls of men? Are not your people the "flock of God, which, he purchased with his own blood?" Will you then dare to

destroy his peculiar property and portion, and attempt to frustrate the end of his death? Did Jesus die for men's souls? and will you grudge a small labour or expense to promote his honour in their eternal salvation? If the Son of God was crucified for men, crucified for you, will you refuse, through his Spirit, to crucify your selfishness, your pride, your sloth, your worldly and covetous disposition, in order to save yourselves, and them that hear you? While your own salvation, and the salvation of multitudes, are so deeply connected with your faithfulness and diligence, while the powers of hell and earth so set themselves in opposition to your work, that, in your falls, they may triumph over Christ, your Master, and his Church, while so many eyes, of God, angels, and men, are upon you, why do you ever think or speak of eternal things, of heaven and hell, of Jesus' person, offices, righteousness, love, and free salvation, without the most serious and deep impression of their importance? While perhaps you preach your last sermon, and have before you, and on every hand of you, hundreds or scores of perishing souls, suspended over hell by the frail thread of mortal life, not knowing what a day or an hour may bring forth, souls already in the hands of the devil, and, as it were, just departing to be with him in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, souls already slain by the gospel of our salvation blasted and cursed to them partly by your means, why do not tears of deep concern mingle themselves with every point you study, every sentence you publish in the name of Christ? When multitudes of your hearers, some of them never to

hear you more, and just leaping off into the depths of hell, are, in respect of their needs, crying with an exceeding bitter cry, "Minister, help, help, we perish, we utterly perish, pluck the brand out of the burning fiery furnace,—why spend your devoted time in idle visits, unedifying converse, useless reading, or unnecessary sleep? What, if, while you are so employed, some of your hearers drop into eternal flames, and begin their everlasting cursing of you for not doing more to promote their salvation? When Jesus arises to require their blood at your hand, how accursed will that knowledge appear, which was not improved for his honour who bestowed it! that ease, which issued in the damnation of multitudes! that conformity to the world, which permitted, or that unedifying converse which encouraged your hearers to sleep into hell in their sins! that pride or luxury which restrained your charity, or disgracefully plunged you into debt! Since, my dear pupils, all the truths of God, all the ordinances and privileges of his Church, the eternal salvation of multitudes, and the infinitely precious honour of Jesus Christ and his Father, as connected with *the present and future ages* of time, are intrusted to you, how necessary, that, like Jesus your Master, you should be faithful in all things to him who appointed you! If you do the work of our Lord deceitfully, in what tremendous manner shall your parents who devoted and educated you for it, your teachers who prepared you for it, the seminaries of learning in which you received your instruction, the years which you spent in your studies, all the gifts which were bestowed upon

you, all the thoughts, words, and works of God, in the redemption of men, all the oracles, commands, promises, and threatenings of God, which direct, inculcate, or enforce your duty, all the examples of Jesus Christ, and all his apostles, prophets, and faithful ministers, all the leaves of your Bible, all the books of your closet, all the engagements you have come under, all the sermons which you preach, all the instructions which you tender to others, all the discipline which you exercise, all the maintenance which you receive, all the honours which you enjoy or expect, all the testimonies which you give against the negligence of parents, masters, ministers, or magistrates, all the vows and resolutions which you have made to reform, and all the prayers which you have presented to God for assistance or success, rise up against you as witnesses, in the day of the Lord !

7. See that ye, as workmen who need not be ashamed, earnestly labour *rightly to divide* the word of truth, according to the capacities, necessities, and particular occasions of your hearers, giving every one of them their portion in due season. Never make your own ease, your inclination or honour, but the need of souls, and the glory of Christ, the regulator in your choice of subjects. Labour chiefly on the principal points of religion : To bring down the fundamental mysteries of the gospel to the capacities of your hearers, and inculcate on their consciences the great points of union to and fellowship with Christ, regeneration, justification, and sanctification ; these will require all your grace, learning, and labour. Never aim at tickling the ears or pleasing the fancies of

your hearers, but at convincing their consciences, enlightening their minds, attracting their affections, and renewing their wills, that they may be persuaded and enabled to embrace and improve Jesus Christ as freely offered to them in the gospel, for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Labour to preach the law as a broken covenant, the gospel of salvation, and the law as a rule of life, not only in their extensive matter, but also in their proper order and connexion. It is only when they are properly connected, that the precious truths of God appear in their true lustre and glory. It is at your infinite hazard, and the infinite hazard of them that hear you, if you, even by negligence, either blend or put asunder that law and gospel which Jesus Christ has so delightfully joined together. No where is it more necessary to take heed, than in preaching up the *duties of holiness*. Let all be founded in union to and communion with Christ; all enforced by the pattern, love, righteousness, and benefits of Christ. Eph. iv. v. vi. Col. iii. v. 1 Pet. iii. iv. [See DICTION. art. GOSPEL, and SABBATH JOURNAL.]

8. You have stated yourselves public witnesses for Jesus Christ, who profess to adhere to, and propagate his *injured truths*, and to commemorate with thankfulness the *remarkable mercies* which he has bestowed on our Church and nation, and to testify against, and mourn over our own and our father's *fearful backslidings* from that covenanted work of reformation once attained in our land: see that ye be judicious, upright, constant, and faithful in your profession. I now approach death, hear-

tily satisfied with our excellent Westminster *Confession of Faith, Catechisms, and Form of church-government*, and cordially adhering to those *Covenants*, by which our fathers solemnly bound themselves and their posterity, to profess the doctrines and practice the duties therein contained. I look upon the Secession as indeed the cause of God, but sadly mismanaged and dishonoured by myself and others. Alas! for that pride, passion, selfishness, and unconcern for the glory of Christ, and spiritual edification of souls, which has so often prevailed! Alas! for our want of due meekness, gentleness, holy zeal, self-denial, hearty grief for sin, compassion to souls in immediate connexion with us, or left in the established church, which became distinguished witnesses for Christ. Alas! that we did not chiefly strive to *pray better, preach better, and live better* than our neighbours. Study to see every thing with your own eyes, but never indulge an itch after novelties: most of those which are now esteemed such, are nothing but *old errors* which were long ago justly refuted, varnished over with some new expressions. Never, by your peevishness, contentions, eagerness about worldly things, or the like, make others think lightly of the cause of God among your hands. If I mistake not, the churches are entering into a fearful cloud of apostacy and trouble. But he that endures to the end shall be saved. Be ye faithful unto the death, and Christ shall give you a crown of life. But if any man draw back, God's soul shall have no pleasure in him.

9. Always improve and live on that blessed encouragement which is offered to you, as Christians and ministers,

in the gospel. Let all your wants be on Christ. "My God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Cast all your cares on him, for he careth for you. Cast all your burdens on him, and he will sustain you. If your holy services, through your mismanagement, occasion your uncommon guilt, his blood *cleanseth from all sin*. You have an "Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who is the propitiation for your sins." If you be often diffculted how to act, he hath said, "The meek will he guide in judgment: the meek will he teach his way. I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go. I will guide thee with mine eye set upon thee. I will lead the blind in a way which they know not." If you be much discouraged because of your rough way, and your want of strength, he has said, "when the poor and needy seek water and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places. Fear not, for I am with thee: be not dismayed for I am thy God. I will strengten thee: Yea, I will help thee: I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. Fear not, worm Jacob, I will help thee, saith the Lord thy Redcemer. I make thee a new sharp thrashing instrument, and thou shalt thrash the mountains. My grace shall be sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. As thy days are, so shall thy strength be." If your troubles be many, he hath said, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; the rivers shall not overflow

thee: When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, nor shall the flame kindle upon thee." If your incomes be small and pinching, "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich." He shall see his seed, the "travail of his soul, and be satisfied:" and he has promised, "I will abundantly bless her provision, and satisfy her poor with bread. I will satiate the soul of her priests with fatness." A salary of remarkable fellowship with Christ, and of success in winning souls, is the most delightful and enriching. If your labours appear to have little success, be more diligent and dependent on Christ. "Never mourn as they that have no hope." Let not the eunuch say, "I am a dry tree," Jesus hath said, "I will pour water on him that is thirsty, and floods on the dry ground, I will pour my Spirit on thy seed, and my blessing on thine offspring. A seed shall serve him. The whole earth shall be filled with his glory. The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ." Believe it on the testimony of God himself: believe it on the testimony of all his faithful servants; and, if mine were of any avail, I should add it, That there is no master so kind as Christ; no service so pleasant and profitable as that of Christ; and no reward so full, satisfying, and permanent as that of Christ. Let us, therefore, "begin all things from Christ; carry on all things with and through Christ; and let all things aim at and end in Christ."









